

October 24, 1969

GRECC PRESS

PRESS PUTDOWN: REAL OR IMAGINED?

Some disquieting and not so subtle flak has been directed at GCC from the outside recently. The brunt of it was directly concerned with Moratorium Day and, while I do not usually give more than perfunctory note to undeserved derogation, I have become more and more angered at the unthinking disparagement of our college. Last week, for example, three different articles in area newspapers indirectly derided GCC students for not staging any demonstration in honor of M-Day. The newspapers interviewed the administration, decided that we weren't aware of the moratorium, and subsequently wrote that Greenfield Community College had taken no steps to observe the day. Their in-depth coverage either was unable to discover that Antigone, a pacifist Greek play, was presented on that night at the college, or they mightn't have thought the production deemed their notice.

Following M-Day, the Greenfield Recorder published an illustrated page of area activities on Oct. 15th. Among the illustrations was a picture of our college auditorium (quite empty) and the caption: "Empty hall at Greenfield Community College, where administration announced the auditorium was available for a total of about five hours for student or faculty members who wished to discuss the war. Nobody took up the offer".

To me, the obvious implication of that caption is that no one at GCC is concerned about the course of the war, or else they would have used the auditorium. Had the reporter taken a minute to think about this ostensible lack of interest, he would have realized that an empty auditorium was not indica-

tive of student concern for the war. It was assumed that many of those students supporting the moratorium would take part in the activities in Amherst or Boston. Being a small commuter college, it is unrealistic to expect GCC to have the manpower and financial backing to plan events of the same scope as the larger colleges. Thus many M-Day supporters at GCC went where the action was. Those who chose to attend classes at GCC (app. 50%) either felt that the moratorium was not such a good idea As All That, or had personal obligations to attend to that day. Thus they should not have felt obligated to observe the day.

I suspect that such derogation, albeit decreasing, can be attributed in part to the tendency to regard small area colleges as vaguely inferior to distant, well-known institutions, as though distance were a direct function of quality. It is too bad that moneyed prestige and "derriere garde" sentiment should lie behind so many people's low opinion of community colleges. It is unfortunate that people who should know better continue to regard the community college as an upper-level high school only for those who aren't quite "college material". While this will neither check our growth nor negate the college's influence upon its students, I am disappointed that we should have to prove ourselves in such inconsequential matters.

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French Club Meeting: Friday October 24th. (today!) Coffee hour with French pastries. 11:30, room 207.

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A tag and bake sale will be held on the front lawn from 10:00 to 3:30 on Oct. 25, the profits will benefit the Student Emergency Loan Fund.

Greenfield Community College
Library

Election Issue:
Muckraking or Miffed Aspirant?
(A letter to the editor)

I feel that the abusive treatment that I received as a candidate for a class office by this newspaper was in poor taste. It seems only fair that the staff of a newspaper, supposedly representing the student body, would have had enough consideration to allow me enough time in advance to answer the accusations that were made in the article. The article seemed to appear the day before the elections were held. Certainly the article could only serve to cut the existing support that I had gathered. In fact the article would seem to be a tool of dirty politics, used to blemish me as a candidate, and my issues.

It would seem only fair that if a reporter were to lodge an attack against a certain candidate and his issues, that reporter should have interpreted the issues correctly. First, concerning the parking situation, I had opposed the administration's strong stand on parking violations. I was against towing and the stiff fees facing car owners. At the time I had felt that the use of the student activity fund could have been one way of allowing the student to repossess his or her car in cases where there is a shortage of money on the student's part. If I as a candidate feel that students and faculty should share equal parking privileges, that is my view and I am entitled to voice it.

In regard to the issue of having a stereo in the student lounge area, it doesn't seem to be such a foolish idea since the Student Government has already voted to put a stereo system over in the new student lounge area in the West Building, in the interest of the students.

As a candidate I felt that extra-curricular activities are an important part of the college, but cer-

tainly not more important than the education it is offering. The extra-curricular activities in some cases leave a lot to be desired, the level at which the college dances are presented is enough to warrant reform which I had already strived for.

In conclusion, I feel that it is only just that the school newspaper allow a candidate the right to defend his reputation against accusations which were released the very day before the students were to begin voting. Accusations which can possibly cut any chance that the candidate may have had of being elected to the office.

Frank J. Carenzo

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In regard to the above letter by Frank Carenzo: thank you for your comments. However, I would like to take to point a few remarks of yours concerning the integrity of the staff and the aim of this newspaper.

As to the "accusations" made in the article, you were accused of absolutely nothing. While it is true that obvious inferences were drawn by the reporter, these were based directly upon statements made by yourself. I hesitate even to use the word inferences; it implies that she drew conclusions, which she did not. The only editorial matter contained in the article were questions concerning your statements which, when put to you, you refused to answer. ("You aren't here to question us on our policies, you're here to interview us".)

Concerning the time you were allotted in which to draw up a campaign statement: you were contacted personally and given a paper on which to write your platform. You had 24 hours in which to do this. Some candidates, because we were unable to locate them, had 10 minutes to do the same. Your official statement was returned with one illegibly

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 scrawled, unsigned sentence. Thus you were interviewed in order to ascertain your statement.

In regard to the reporter's interpreting the issues: you gave us no choice. Because you did not allow any questioning of your terse statements, we were forced to draw our own inferences about what you were trying to say. You were given every chance to explain your statements during the interview, but you refused to take the interview seriously.

In passing: minus the first and last paragraphs, your letter is an adequate and thoughtful summation of your policies. Why didn't you take the trouble to give us this information when we asked you for it?

Your comment about the timing of the newspaper puzzles me. What more appropriate time is there to publish a resume of the candidates than the day before the election? You were approached in the same manner as each other candidate and given the same opportunity to express yourself. You muffed your chances, not us.

Your tactless and irrelevant remarks implying partisan loyalties and "dirty politics" are herewith accorded the consideration they merit: - C.P.

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GRECC PRESS:
 PREGNANT PROSE OR
 PREJUDICED PRATTLE?
 (A letter to the editor)

This is written, not with the intent of inflating an unpleasant issue, or of stirring up a scandalous atmosphere. And I have neither the pleasure nor the misfortune of being a personal acquaintance of Frank Carenzo. Let this be consid-

ered a criticism of two things. First, of the GRECC PRESS's method of handling its election issue; and second, of the logic employed in its defense of its method.

On the GRECC election issue - As for its printing of the statements of the candidates, the GRECC PRESS may be commended. However, upon reading the material on Frank Carenzo which is found on page two, a feeling of distaste enveils the reader. Granted, it is the inherent right of a newspaper to print material of editorial opinion, but among a group of freshmen who know so little about each other it would seem wiser to refrain from applying such influence at such a critical time. If the time was Spring, 1970, when people were better acquainted, such an editorial might be acceptable, serving to point out unfavorable facets of a candidate for office. At this stage of the game, however, such an editorial is the only manner in which a great number of people learn of the qualifications (or in this case the incompetence) of a candidate. Obviously, Miss Mirabello's editorial is prejudiced against Frank Carenzo. Due to these circumstances, I feel that the editorial is made unfair by its time of publication.

The second criticism is of the logic (?) of the GRECC PRESS staff as it attempts to counter the article on pages three and four of the same issue. This article is an outcry against the savage degradation given to Frank Carenzo by Miss Mirabello's editorial. In defending its editorial, the GRECC PRESS staff footnoted this protest with two rather juvenile statements. The first statement tells us that "The editor did not write the article". Since Miss Mirabello is a member of the Grecc staff, this article is an editorial, whether or not it was written by the person with the "editor" sign on his desk. The second footnote states that "When given the

opportunity to prove himself, Frank Carenzo wrote 'I will strive for direct representation for the freshmen class of 1970'". Simply reading this footnote leads one to the conclusion that the GRECC staff feels that by making campaign statements such as "For a great school...lets make better the best", or by boasting that "In high school ...I was in control of most of the activities for the school", a candidate proves himself. It seems to me that a candidate proves himself not by making lavish campaign promises, but by his personal performance both before and after he is elected to office. Therefore, I find a statement such as "I will strive for direct representation for the freshman class of 1970" to be more solid, and more likely to be followed through than many promised offered by candidates. After all, what more does any group want from its leader?

Peter Smith

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As an editorial comment upon Peter Smith's article, I will along the same lines as Mr. Smith and define first, the newspaper's handling of the election and, secondly, our defense of the method.

The purpose of that particular issue was to acquaint the freshmen voters with the candidates. You state that "it would seem wiser to refrain from applying such influence at such a crucial time". Are you implying that freshmen should not be concerned with the ethical qualities of the candidates? It would seem so, for you imply that a candidate's character and his ideas are not related. Therefore the voters do not need to know what type of man they are voting for. I feel that the voter should have the choice of whether or not to consider such factors. To have this choice, they must, of course,

have the information. I do not see the relevance of your remark that such an article would be more "just" in the spring when people presumably know one another better. The familiarity and the degree of rapport between candidate and voter in no way affects the rights of a newspaper to express editorial opinion.

In regard to the author's prejudice against Mr. Carenzo: if you re-read the article, you would realize that the justifiable questions raised by Miss Mirabello are not nearly so damning as Mr. Carenzo's own statements. These statements were, one must remember, straight from the horse's mouth.

You imply in the second half of your letter that the newspaper compared Mr. Carenzo's statement with those of other candidates. There is no inference, indirect or otherwise, drawn between the statements. By emphasizing this point in your letter, you seem to be apologizing and trying to compensate for the brevity of his platform. The staff is not concerned with "proving" anyone one way or another. Mr. Carenzo was interviewed because the newspaper wished to give the voter a more comprehensive view of his platform. Thus he had a second opportunity to clarify himself. He did not at that time deem it worthy of his trouble.

Thus the staff of the newspaper stands behind this article for, despite the unfortunate repercussions which have been attributed to it, it was not slanderous. Slander is based upon false representation and malicious intent. The factual content of the article is based entirely upon direct quotations given by Mr. Carenzo and the article was written not with the intention of defaming Mr. Carenzo, but rather of disclosing his policies to the voter. - C.P.

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Basketball Candidates: A meeting
Fri. Oct. 24. (Today!) 11:00, rm. 103.